



Testimony before the Education Committee
IN SUPPORT OF SECTION 6 OF HB 5169 IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
Testimony by Georgia Goldburn,
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Monday, February 26th, 2018

Good afternoon Senator Fleischman, Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, and distinguished members of the Education Committee.

When I approached Representative Candelaria in 2015 about the shoot out and police standoff that occurred outside of our facility and alerted him to the fact that while the surrounding schools were placed on lock down, childcare facilities were not even notified, Representative Candelaria responded immediate to address this critical public safety issue. I would like to thank Representative Candelaria for addressing the concerns felt by the Office of Early Childhood and the many devoted early care providers with the passage of P.A. 15-161 Notification by Law Enforcement Agencies to Daycare Centers.

While P.A. 15-161 was a critical step in creating a mechanism to protect the youngest children in care in the event of an emergency, the changes proposed by the Office of Early Childhood in Section 6 of H.B. 5169 would create a more efficient and practical system and reflect the current practice. The current statutory language requiring early care and education providers to individually provide contact information to the local or regional police is not practical and has not worked well because many providers are not clear who those points of contact are in their communities.

Through an agreement between the Office of Early Childhood, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, and the United Way of Connecticut, a protocol has been developed and implemented that is efficient and has proven successful. The United Way provides the necessary contact information directly to the state's mass notification system. Centers and homes are alerted in the case of local or statewide emergencies. This capitalizes on mechanisms that providers are currently using, i.e. providing updated contact information to the United Way annually and eliminates one more, albeit critical, task on a director's already full plate. All while preserving the intent of P.A. 15-161.

It is for this reason that I speak in support of the changes outlined in section 6.